

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, March 3, 1709.

AND what do you gather now, say the Opposers of all Relief to the Miserable, from your Scheme of the vast Army of Bankrupts in *England*? If there be 80000 Insolvents, there are 200000 Thieves, who lie now up and down devouring honest Mens Estates; and you would have all these let go, would you, that they might try the same Trick over again, and worry Trade it self to Death by the innumerable Tricks, Frauds and Shams, which they have learn'd in those Sanctuaries of Rogues, the Mint and Rules; the more there are, the more need to keep them under the Yash of the Law.

So talk the mad Men of this Age, but calm Reasoning talks quite another Language; Pray, will you hear it a little?

1. It is a vast Number of Families to lie languishing and perishing, bound Hand Foot from Labour and Industry; in Point of Charity and in Point of Policy, they should be taken into some Management, and their Circumstances made either better or worse.
2. Are they Thieves? — Why then hang them — I am perswaded, there are many of them would sign a Petition to be deliver'd from the horrid Condition they are now in, by the Gallows; Death is not half so terrible, as a lingering, starving Confinement, without Bread or Liberty. Were some of the Creditors but to see, what the Debtors, they have laid up in Prisons, suffer, I can hardly think, their Hearts could

could bear the Sight, and not open the Doors to them.

3. But this is not what I plead for; it is not to be expected, that Charity and Compassion should do this Work, but let us come to Reasoning—— Examine the Law, and there I demand Justice for them, and do aver, that in all the Nations of the Earth it is counted reasonable, and their Laws provide for it; that the Person of the Debtor should not be confin'd for the Payment of his Debt, unless he could be convicted of Fraud, and then he was not confin'd for Payment, but for Punishment; nor has it been the Intent and Meaning of the Laws of *England*, that it should be so here, however Cruelty and Barbarity have prevail'd in these latter Times.
4. I plead for it from the Interest of the Creditor—— Do these 80000 Men and their Families live on your Estates, and eat out your Stocks; devour your Properties, and spend your Money—— Why do you let them do it? Why do you not take it from them, and turn them going? I dare say, every one of them would consent to an Act, that whoever with-held a Farthing from his Creditors, the Cloaths on his Back excepted, should be hang'd at the *Exchange-Gate*, provided they might then be Freeman—— And I am sure, I would be the last Man should plead for a Reprieve to any Man that would not—— Far be it from me, or any honest Man, to plead for Debtors spending their Creditors Estates; let them all be strip'd as naked as you will, give them but Air to breath, and Liberty to work for more: But to call Men Thieves when they eat your Bread, and you will not give them leave to eat their own, is to call your selves Devils and not Men, Barbarians, not Christians, that are for locking Men up from Labour, and then blaming them for eating your Bread—— They ought to eat your Bread; and if they have it not in their own keeping

you ought to send it them, or you are Murderers, and that's a Degree worse than Thieves—— Let the Laws here say what they will, Laws may be unlawful in their Nature, tho' they have the Sanction of the Legislature of the Country—— And he that will imprison a Man, when he knows he can neither pay him his Debt, nor feed himself there, is as much a Murderer in the Sense of GOD's Law, as he that should go and pistol his Debtor in the Dark, would be in the Eye of our Law.

If then you would have your Estates from the Hands of Debtors, why do you not take them? Strip them as naked as you will, and turn them loose, you may certainly have all your Estates out of their Hands; *that is*, as far as it is in their Hands; for it is no farther they are to be call'd Thieves and Devourers of your Estates—— It is the Cruelty of Creditors which makes Debtors Thieves, and keeps the Estate of the Creditor out of their Hand—— You'll say the Guilt lies first on the Debtor, for taking my Estate into his Hands, and I'll allow that to be true, without debating the Exceptions that may lie against it—— But if the Debtor see his Error, and testify his Sence of it, by being ready to deliver up all he has left, and make all the Satisfaction to me and the rest of his Creditors, that he can, desiring to reserve nothing but his Liberty, and I will not let him do it; I transfer the rest of the Guilt from the Debtor to my self, and I am the Cause, why the Creditors, who are willing, are not satisfy'd, and why the poor Man lives upon the rest—— For Human Nature cannot starve; and if the Creditor will not give him his Hands to work, he must be content he eats up what is in his Possession. And this is the Reason and Foundation of all the Laws in Foreign Countries, and in a Part of our own, wherein *Scotland* is both more just and more merciful than we are; *Viz.* That if a Creditor will confine his Debtor, and the Debtor cannot subsist himself, **THE CREDITOR SHALL**; for the Man must not starve—— And *what is the*

Lan-

Language of this Law? But that it is lawful for the Debtor to live on the Creditors Effects all the while he is confin'd, and consequently prevented labouring to subsist himself. — I grant this may be carry'd too high, and a conscientious Debtor would live very sparingly on it; but I am speaking of the Justice of the Case, when Things are brought to Extremities.

5. I have one Observation more to make from the vast Number of Insolvents, which I have supposed to be in this Nation, and that is, that by this may be seen the fatal Deficiency of all Laws already made for the Ease of poor Debtors, and also the fatal Effects of that implacable Spirit, which reigns so generally in this Nation against unfortunate Tradesmen: I could note here some remarkable Instances of Men, that have been the common Destroyers or the unhappy Devourers of Men and Families, who have by the Wheel of Providence been brought down to the same Misery; but I shall only tell them in short, *they may read their Sin in their Punishment*, let them caution others to avoid the like.

But I would be glad to hear, in that whole Affair, has Severity and Fury, or a calm Prosecution of the Law, as the Nature of the Thing requir'd, brought the Creditor the greatest Advantage?

When the Bankrupt was seiz'd and brought home, did a calm Capitulation, or a furious and contemptible Mortifying him, bring him to the Discovery of his Estate?

In the Prosecution of his Discovery, did a Treaty and Harkning to Proposals, produce a Payment, or did it not? — And has all the Violence and Fury practis'd since, produc'd one Shilling in the Pound more, or is it likely to do so, or is it not? — I have nothing to do with Persons and Crimes, let every Man answer for his own. — But I am upon the Deficiency of Methods, and I state the Enquiry fair, whether the Severity and Fury of Creditors, or calm and compos'd Listening to the Proposals of the Debtors, and making the best of Things by Treaty; whether, *I say*, of these Two has brought the most Advantage to the Creditor?

ADVERTISEMENT.

Lately Publish'd,

A New Description of the World, delineating *Europe, Asia, Africa, and America*; with a Map and Tables of the Empires, Kingdoms, Provinces, and Cities therein, together with a Chronological and Historical Account of the Emperors, Kings, Princes, Governments, Religion, Languages, Customs, Commodities, Revolutions, and Rareties thereof. By *H. Curson, Gent.* Sold by *John Morphew, near Stationers-Hall.* (Price 2 s.)

An

And what Advantage has it been to Creditors? Have the Gentle or the Furious one with another made the best Produce of a Bankrupts Estate? — I wish, you would bear, Gentlemen; to have this examin'd, and I would be glad, any Man would name me a Case, in which I could illustrate this, for the general Instruction with an Impartiality not to be reproach'd, some Case in which I am equally a Stranger to both Parties; and till I am better supply'd, I'll take a Case publick enough. — And in which, before I speak of it, I solemnly profess, I am a Person perfectly indifferent, I mean the Case of *PITKIN*, a known Case to all the World, but so happily distant to me in all its Circumstances, that tho' my Acquaintance is none of the least in the World — Yet I have no Manner of Knowledge or Correspondence either on one side or other with Debtor or Creditor.

Just publish'd,
THE SCOT'S NARRATIVE
 Examind, with a Vindication of the
 Magistrates of *Edinburgh* in particular, and
 the Government of *Britain* in general, in
 their Proceedings against the *Episcopal Dis-*
senters in Scotland. (Price 6d.)

An Advertisement of CHARITY.

BY *SIR WILLIAM READ* Her Majesty's
OCULIST, Who has by the Blessing
 of GOD, on his long Experience with un-
 usual Success, cur'd great Numbers of Peo-
 ple of Cancers, Ulcers, Fistulas, Wens,
 Double and Single, Hair Lips, Wry Necks,
 and other Deformities, with Deafness tho'
 of long Continuance, but especially of
 Blindness, Dimness of Sight, Cataracts, and
 all Disorders of the Eyes, and even many
 that have been born Blind.

He shall continue in Town at his House
 in *Durham Yard* in the *Strand*, where all
 the Afflicted in the aforesaid Cases may ap-
 ply to him.

He continues to give his Advice and
 Assistance to the Poor *Gratis*, especially to
 such Seamen and Soldiers as have receiv'd
 any Injury to their Sight in the Service of
 their Country whom he has always assisted,
 ever since the Beginning of King *William's*
 Reign, to whom he was also sworn Occulist;
 He has cur'd great Numbers of them in meer
 Charity, who must otherwise have been
 useless to themselves, and chargeable to
 the Government, and resolves still to con-
 tinue his Charity to them as freely as ever.

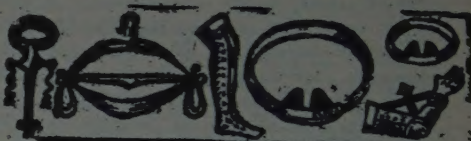
Such as send to his House may also have
 at reasonable Rates his restorative Medicines
 for the Eyes, which prevent Suffusions or
 Cataracts in their Beginnings, and clear
 and preserve the Sight.

Also the Lady *READ* has by long Expe-
 rience and very successful Practice arriv'd to
 an extraordinary Skill in Couching Cata-
 racts, which she performs with great
 Dexterity and Success.

THE Famous LOZENGES being effe-
 ctual in all Scorbutick Cases; they ease
 Pains in the Head and Stomach, cause a good
 Appetite, purifie the Blood, and give speedy
 Relief in Rheumatism, Dropsie, and Gout,
 and totally destroy the very Seed of Worms.

They cure Agues and Revers of all Sorts,
 give present Ease in the Cholick, Stone and
 Gravel, cleanse the Body after hard Drink-
 ing; as also after the Small-Pox, Measles,
 and Child-bearing, and are a more general
 Cathartick Medicine than any yet known.

Prepar'd only by *R. Owner*, Apothecary, at
 the Pestle and Mortar, in *East Smithfield*.



BARTLETT'S Inventions for the
 Cure of Ruptures, which have gain'd
 so Universal Esteem, are now, yet farther
 Improv'd to so great a Nicety, that one
 of his Steel Spring Trusses of the largest
 Size, seldom Exceeds 4 ounces in Weight,
 and one of the smallest rarely exceeds a
 quarter of an Ounce, and are so well a-
 dapted to the Shapes of human Bodies,
 that they are extraordinary easy even to
 New-born Infants, and Intirely keep
 up the Ruptures of what Bigness soever.
 Also divers Instruments to help the Weak
 and Crooked. By *P. Bartlet* at the Golden
 Ball by the Ship Tavern in Prefect Street
 in Goodmans Fields, London.

N.B. His Mother, the Widow of the late
Mr. Christopher Bartlett, lives at the Place
 above mention'd, and is very skillful in the
 Business of her own Sex.